

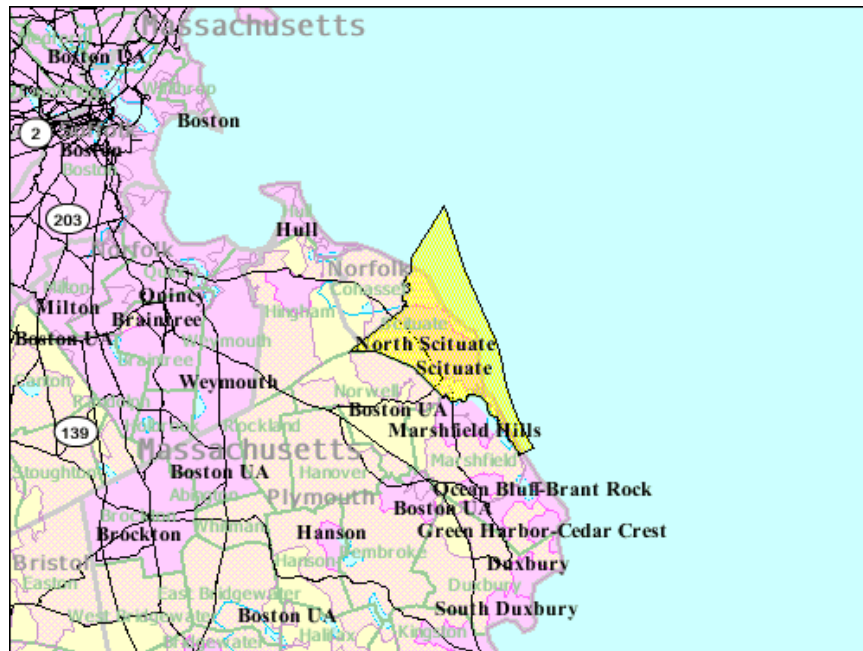
# SCITUATE, MA<sup>1</sup>

## Community Profile<sup>2</sup>

### PEOPLE AND PLACES

#### Regional orientation

The Town of Scituate (42.20° N, 70.73° W) is located in the South Shore region of Massachusetts, in Plymouth County, 30 miles south of Boston. Scituate faces Cape Cod Bay and is bordered by Marshfield and Norwell to the south and Cohasset to the north. It encompasses 31.79 square miles, of which 17.18 square miles is land, and 14.61 square miles is water (State of Massachusetts 2006).



Map 1. Location of Scituate, MA (US Census Bureau 2000)

#### Historical/Background

The name Scituate comes from a Wampanoag Indian word meaning “cold brook” (Town of Scituate 2006). The first permanent European settlement in Scituate was in 1627 or 1628, when a group from Plymouth headed north looking for fertile lands to cultivate. The town was incorporated in 1636 (Town of Scituate 2006). Portions of the area that originally made up Scituate later became the towns of Norwell and Hanover, and a portion of Scituate was ceded to Marshfield. Scituate was an important fishing port by the end of the eighteenth century because of its protected harbor, but mud flats and shallow water made the harbor difficult to enter, so the town built Scituate Light here, completing construction in 1811 (D’Entremont 2006).

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<sup>1</sup> These community profiles have been created to serve as port descriptions in Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for fisheries management actions. They also provide baseline information from which to begin research for Social Impact Assessments (SIAs). Further, they provide information relevant to general community impacts for National Standard 8 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and information on minorities and low income populations for Executive Order (E.O.) 12898 on Environmental Justice.

<sup>2</sup> For purposes of citation please use the following template: “Community Profile of *Town, ST*. Prepared under the auspices of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Fisheries Science Center. For further information contact [Lisa.L.Colburn@noaa.gov](mailto:Lisa.L.Colburn@noaa.gov).”

Shipbuilding was also an important industry to residents of Scituate; between 1645-1871 there were over 1,000 ships built in the North River, which separates Scituate from Marshfield (Marshfield Chamber of Commerce 2006). At the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Scituate was still a small town with around 2,000 residents. Scituate has since transitioned from a summer colony to a residential community, rapidly expanding in recent years because of its proximity to Boston, its miles of beaches, and its excellent school system, all of which draw residents to this town (Town of Scituate 2006). It also has one of the lowest crime rates in the state (Norwell and Scituate Real Estate 2006). Scituate has 21 miles of waterways, including five beaches, four rivers, and a large, sheltered harbor (Town of Scituate 2006a). Scituate's commercial fishing fleet adds to the town's appeal and historical ties. "The Town of Scituate is a delightful mix of rural, suburban and seaside lifestyles within a 25 mile ride to the City of Boston" (Town of Scituate 2006).

### Demographics<sup>3</sup>

According to Census 2000 data, Scituate had a total population of 17,863, up 6.4% from the reported population of 16,786 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this 2000 total in, 47.7% were males and 52.3% were females. The median age was 40.7 years and 71.8% of the population was 21 years or older while 18.1% was 62 or older.

Scituate's population structure (Figure 1) is typical of a relatively young, family-oriented community. The most populous age bracket is 40-49, followed by 30-39, and there are also lots of children and teenagers. The population takes a dip for the 20-29 age bracket, as is common in many communities when young people leave to go to college or to seek jobs. There are also more women than men in all age brackets past the age of 20, indicating that either men are leaving the town or that women are migrating to Scituate for jobs or some other reason.

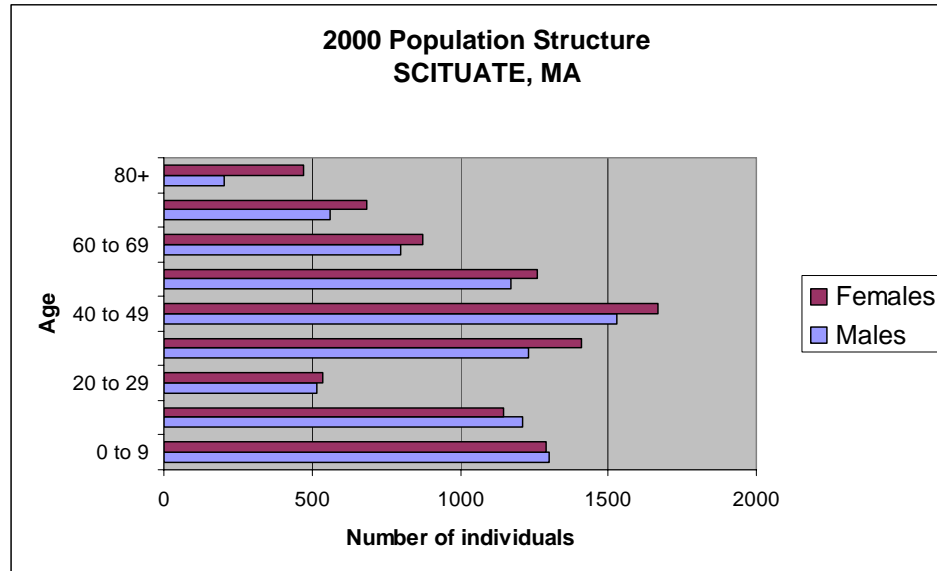


Figure 1. Scituate's population structure by sex in 2000

The majority of the population was white (97.7%), with 0.5% of residents Black or African American, 0.4% Asian, 0.03% Native American, and 0.01% Pacific Islander or

<sup>3</sup> While mid-term estimates are available for some larger communities, data from the 2000 Census are the only data universally available for the communities being profiled in the Northeast. Thus for cross-comparability we have used 2000 data even though these data may have changed significantly since 2000 for at least some communities.

Hawaiian (see Figure 2). Only 0.8% of the population identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (see Figure 3). Residents linked their backgrounds to a number of different ancestries including: Irish (44.2%), English (17.9%), Italian (14.4%), and German (8.6%). With regard to region of birth, 74.3% were born in Massachusetts, 21.7% were born in a different state and 3.8% were born outside of the U.S. (including 1.6% who were not United States citizens).

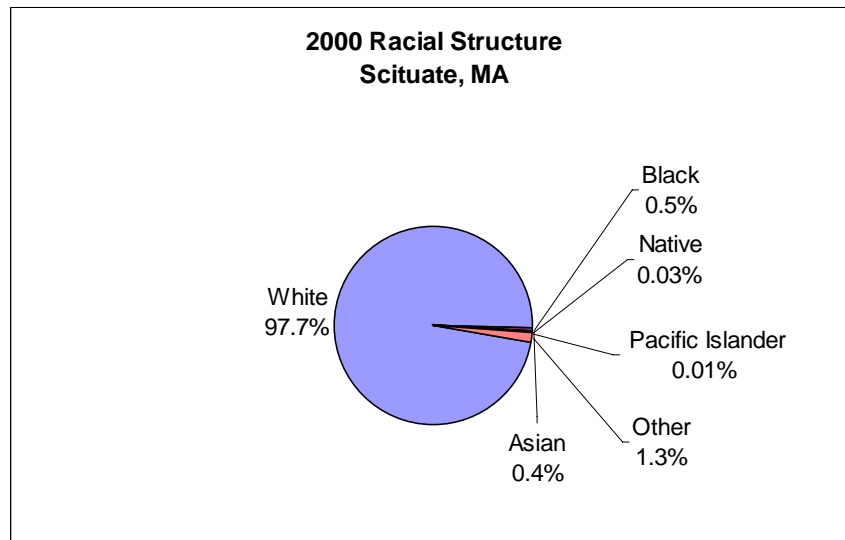


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

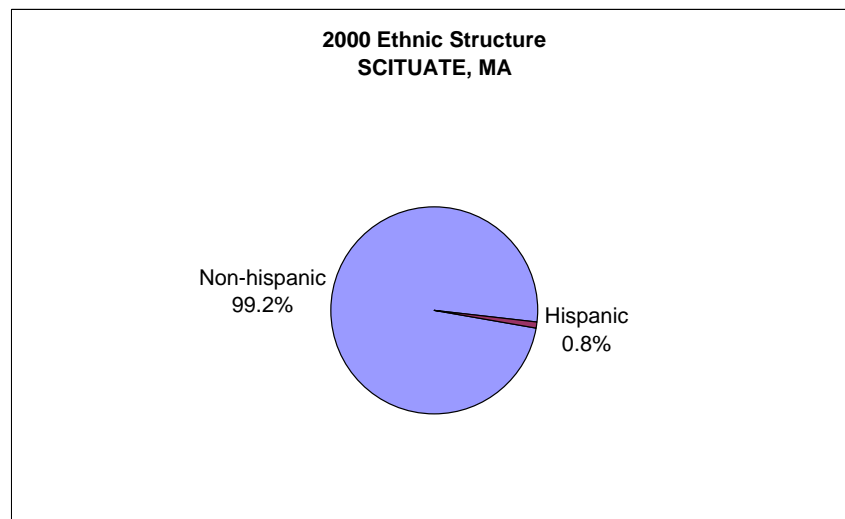


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 94.5% of the population, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 5.5% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including 2.0% of the population who spoke English less than “very well” according to the 2000 Census.

Of the population 25 years and over, 95.8% were high school graduates or higher and 47.6% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 0.9% did not reach ninth grade, 3.3% attended some high school but did not graduate, 20.4% completed high school, 18.9% had some college with no degree, 8.9% received an associate’s degree,

32.1% earned a bachelor's degree, and 15.4% received either a graduate or professional degree.

Although religion percentages are not available through the U.S. Census, according to the Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) in 2000, the religion with the highest number of congregations and adherents in Plymouth County was Catholic with 40 congregations and 205,060 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were Jewish (8 with 23,600 adherents), United Church of Christ (25 with 9,491 adherents) and Episcopal (15 with 6,894 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was down 36.1% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

### **Issues/Processes**

A 2004 report noted that the Town Pier, which is the only deep-water facility in Scituate, was run-down, and the groundfishing fleet and lobstermen were competing for the same limited space (Michaud 2004). In 2005 some immediate improvements were made to the pier to improve the working conditions, but it is still aging (Town of Scituate 2005).

The US Coast Guard closed their Scituate base; they maintain a small office next to the harbor master's building, but most of their larger vessels, including search and rescue vessels, must now travel from Hull or Sandwich to reach this area.<sup>4</sup> Discussions on closing all or part of the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary off the coast of Scituate to fishing also have many fishermen worried (DeLory 2004).

### **Cultural attributes**

Each August, Scituate celebrates its heritage with the Heritage Days festival, featuring a fishing tournament for striped bass and bluefish, and a lobster bake. In the fall, the town holds a ChowderFest as part of its Fall for Scituate festival (Scituate Chamber of Commerce 2006). Scituate's Maritime and Irish Mossing Museum is dedicated to the town's maritime heritage, including the shipbuilding industry that once thrived here, and the historically important trade of harvesting Irish Moss algae in Scituate (Scituate Historical Society 2006).

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Current Economy**

The largest employer in the town of Scituate is by far the town itself, which, including town government, services, and the school district, employs 600-700 people. Other sizable employers are Jamie's Grille and Pub and the Village Market.<sup>5</sup> There are several large buildings in the Greenbush area housing physicians, clinics, and other medical services which are likely to employ a number of people.<sup>6</sup>

According to the U.S. Census 2000<sup>7</sup>, 65.9% (9,243 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (see Figure 4), of which 1.6% were unemployed, 0.2% were in the Armed Forces, and 65.9% were employed.

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<sup>4</sup> Profile review comment, William Adler, Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association, 8 Otis Place, Scituate, MA 02066, August 29, 2007

<sup>5</sup> Personal Communication, Laura Harbottle, Scituate Town Planner, Town Hall, 600 Chief Justice Cushing Way, Scituate, MA 02066, 8/9/05

<sup>6</sup> Profile review comment, William Adler, Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association, 8 Otis Place, Scituate, MA 02066, August 29, 2007

<sup>7</sup> Again, Census data from 2000 are used because they are universally available and offer cross-comparability among communities. Some statistics, particularly median home price, are likely to have changed significantly since 2000.

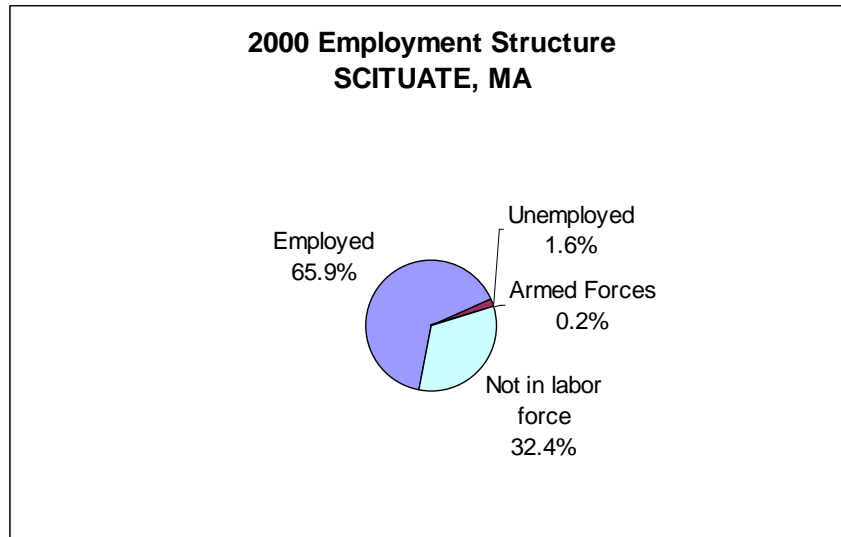


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 77 positions or 0.9% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 837 positions or 9.3% of jobs. Education, health, and social services (22.1%), finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing (12.9%), professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services (10.9%), and retail trade (10.3%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Scituate was \$70,868 (up 36.2% from \$52,044 in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and per capita income was \$33,940. For full-time year round workers, males made approximately 50.0% more per year than females.

The average family in Scituate consisted of 3.13 persons. With respect to poverty, 1.4% of families (down from 1.8% in 1990 [US Census Bureau 1990]) and 2.6% of individuals earned below the U.S. Census poverty threshold. This threshold is \$8,794 for individuals and ranges from \$11,239-35,060 for families, depending on number of persons (2-9) (US Census Bureau 2000b). In 2000, 11.1% of all families of any size earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Scituate had a total of 7,685 housing units of which 87.1% were occupied and 86.2% were detached one unit homes. Nearly 30% of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes accounted for 0.2% of the total housing units; 84.3% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$276,000. Of vacant housing units, 10.6% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units 17.0% were renter occupied.

## Government

The Town of Scituate is governed by a Board of Selectmen, with five members elected to three year terms, and has a Town Meeting form of government (Town of Scituate 2006).

### *Fishery involvement in government*

Scituate has a Shellfish Officer who is given authority to enforce shellfishing regulations within the town. The Board of Selectmen is responsible for issuing shellfish permits (Town of Scituate 2006). Scituate also has a harbor master's office.

## **Institutional**

### *Fishing associations*

The [Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association](#) is located in Scituate; this organization represents the interests of commercial lobstermen throughout Massachusetts. The South Shore Lobstermen's Association recently moved to Marshfield from Scituate, but holds some of their meetings in Scituate.<sup>8</sup>

The [Massachusetts Fisherman's Partnership](#) focuses on issues for fishermen in different ports in Massachusetts. The Partnership responded to the need of health care for fishermen and their families by developing the Fishing Partnership Health Insurance Plan with federal and state aid. This plan has been in place since 1997 and reduces the amount of money that fishermen's families have to pay to be covered by health insurance (Hall-Arber et al. 2000).

### *Fishing assistance centers*

Information on fishing assistance centers in Scituate is unavailable through secondary data collection.

### *Other fishing related organizations*

The headquarters of the [Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary](#) is located in Scituate; the Sanctuary Advisory Council includes fishermen, and the activities of the Sanctuary can affect fishing in Scituate and other communities. The [North and South Rivers Watershed Association](#) aims to protect the watershed of these two rivers, restore water quality and habitat, and educate the public about the watershed through public education, outreach, and recreation programs. The watershed is located in twelve towns on the South Shore of Massachusetts, including Scituate. The Association has taken a lead in monitoring the rivers for pollutants and mitigating identifiable sources of pollution.<sup>9</sup>

## **Physical**

Scituate is 20 miles from Plymouth and 30 miles from Boston. State Routes 3A and 123 connect Scituate with Route 3, which travels between Cape Cod and Boston. Neighboring Marshfield has its own municipal airport; the closest large airport is Logan International Airport in Boston, 19 miles away. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority provides public transportation via commuter rail to Boston via the [Greenbush Commuter Rail Line](#) that passes directly through Scituate, completed in October 2007. The Plymouth and Brockton Street Railway Company provides bus service between Scituate and Boston.

There are three harbors in Scituate: Scituate Harbor, and the North and South Rivers (Michaud 2004). Scituate Harbor is on the landward side of two protected coves. Scituate has a Town Pier with space for about 15 vessels, located in the harbor. One section of the harbor's moorings is also designated solely for commercial vessels (Hall-Arber et al. 2001). The groundfish vessels tie up at the Town Pier, while the lobster boats use the moorings. The Town Pier is used exclusively by the commercial fishing fleet; catches are unloaded here onto trucks where they are shipped to dealers and processors. Ice is also shipped here from New Bedford or Gloucester; access to ice is a big problem here. The lobstermen have created their own landing,

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<sup>8</sup> Profile review comment, William Adler, Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association, 8 Otis Place, Scituate, MA 02066, August 29, 2007

<sup>9</sup> Profile review comment, Joseph Strazdes, Scituate Shellfish Warden, Town of Scituate, 600 Chief Justice Cushing Way, Scituate, MA 02066, September 20, 2007

with marina floats donated by the harbormaster. Lobstermen use the Cole Parkway Marina as well for landings.<sup>10</sup>

There are also eleven marinas in Scituate. The town has a total of 673 moorings and 650 slips for use by both commercial and recreational vessels (Michaud 2004). Diesel fuel is available from the pier (Hall-Arber 2001). There are two boat ramps in town (Town of Scituate 2006). [Belsan Bait and Tackle](#) in Scituate serves primarily recreational fishermen.

## **INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES<sup>11</sup>**

### **Commercial**

The majority of commercial vessels in Scituate are lobster vessels; there are about 15 groundfish vessels located at the town pier. Three retail markets, Nautical Mile Seafood, Mulaney's Harborside, and Fourth Cliff buy lobsters from the local lobstermen (Michaud 2004). Irish moss, a type of seaweed, was traditionally harvested in Scituate for many years and was a significant industry, but is now generally harvested from cheaper sources outside of the United States.<sup>12</sup>

Scituate has a very diverse fishery, with a number of different species and gear types. Lobster was the most valuable species landed here in 2006, bringing in nearly \$1.8 million (see Table 1). The second most valuable species grouping in 2006 was largemouth groundfish, followed by monkfish. The landings values for lobster in 2006 was much higher than the average landings values for 1997-2006; the landings for groundfish in 2006 had declined from the ten-year average however. The total landings in Scituate had their highest point in 2000, at close to \$4.8 million, then declined somewhat in subsequent years. Overall, the number of vessels home ported in Scituate varied from 1997-2006, reaching a high of 81 in 2002, and declining to 63 by 2006. The value of fishing to home ported vessels in Scituate increased somewhat during this time period, to \$3.4 million in 2006 (see Table 2). Also of interest is that the number of vessels owned by Scituate residents declined over the same period, indicating that perhaps the vessel owners are moving out of Scituate, or that the vessels are changing hands.

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries reported 45 commercial lobstermen fishing out of Scituate in 2006. Scituate was ranked 11<sup>th</sup> in the state in catch (pounds) for state landings.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Profile review comment, William Adler, Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association, 8 Otis Place, Scituate, MA 02066, August 29, 2007

<sup>11</sup> In reviewing the commercial landings data several factors need to be kept in mind. 1) While both federal and state landings are included, some states provide more detailed data to NMFS than others. For example, shellfish may not be included or data may be reported only by county and not by port. 2) Some communities did not have individual port codes until more recently. Before individual port codes were assigned, landings from those ports were coded at the county level or as an aggregate of two geographically close small ports. Where landings were coded at the county level they cannot be sorted to individual ports for those earlier years, e.g., prior to 2000. 3) Where aggregated codes were used, those aggregate codes may still exist and be in use alongside the new individual codes. Here the landings which are still assigned to the aggregate port code cannot be sorted into the individual ports, so port level data are only those which used the individual port code. 4) Even when individual port codes exist, especially for small ports, landings may be coded at the county level. Here again it is impossible to disaggregate these to a port level, making the port level landings incomplete. 5) In all these cases, the per port data in this profile may under report the total level of landings to the port, though all landings are accounted for in the overall NMFS database.

<sup>12</sup> Profile review comment, William Adler, Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association, 8 Otis Place, Scituate, MA 02066, August 29, 2007

<sup>13</sup> Data provided by William Adler, Massachusetts Lobstermen's Association, 8 Otis Place, Scituate, MA 02066, September 5, 2007



## Landings by Species

Table 1. Dollar value of Federally Managed Groups of landing in Scituate

	Average from 1997-2006	2006 only
<b>Largemouth Groundfish<sup>14</sup></b>	1,423,269	1,221,144
<b>Lobster</b>	1,258,349	1,773,974
<b>Monkfish</b>	402,945	188,020
<b>Dogfish</b>	74,765	17,572
<b>Other<sup>15</sup></b>	29,467	34,964
<b>Skate</b>	16,538	23,924
<b>Squid, Mackerel, Butterfish</b>	12,405	668
<b>Scallop</b>	9,034	28,418
<b>Bluefish</b>	4,775	1,290
<b>Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass</b>	3,539	1,452
<b>Surf Clams, Ocean Quahog</b>	2,459	0
<b>Smallmesh Groundfish<sup>16</sup></b>	1,926	31
<b>Tilefish</b>	144	0

*Note: Red crab are also landed, but data cannot be reported due to confidentiality.*

## Vessels by Year<sup>17</sup>

Table 1. All columns represent vessel permits or landings value combined between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# Vessels (owner's city)	Level of fishing home port (\$)	Level of fishing landed port (\$)
<b>1997</b>	79	55	2,573,583	1,371,648
<b>1998</b>	70	50	2,727,569	2,855,762
<b>1999</b>	78	59	2,015,519	2,092,982
<b>2000</b>	75	53	2,934,249	4,770,224
<b>2001</b>	79	50	2,093,487	3,484,206
<b>2002</b>	81	50	2,258,030	3,837,513
<b>2003</b>	74	49	2,597,671	4,219,873
<b>2004</b>	77	53	2,798,574	3,815,547
<b>2005</b>	68	48	2,845,396	2,763,997
<b>2006</b>	63	44	3,460,992	3,291,457

*(Note: # Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport*

*# Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence<sup>18</sup>*

*Level of fishing home port (\$) = Landed value of fisheries associated with home ported vessels*

*Level of fishing landed port (\$) = Landed value of fisheries landed in location)*

<sup>14</sup> Largemouth groundfish: cod, winter flounder, yellowtail flounder, American plaice, sand-dab flounder, haddock, white hake, redfish, and pollock

<sup>15</sup> "Other" species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

<sup>16</sup> Smallmesh multi-species : red hake, ocean pout, mixed hake, black whiting, silver hake (whiting)

<sup>17</sup> Numbers of vessels by owner's city and homeport are as reported by the permit holder on permit application forms. These may not correspond to the port where a vessel lands or even spends the majority of its time when docked.

<sup>18</sup> The Owner-City from the permit files is technically the address at which the owner receives mail concerning their permitted vessels, which could reflect the actual location of residence, the mailing address as distinct from residence, owner business location, or the address at which a subsidiary receives mail about the permits.



## Recreational

Scituate has a few [fishing charter companies](#) that fish for striped bass, bluefish, bluefin tuna, cod, and [other species](#), including one boat that specializes in [shark fishing](#). Fishing off bridges, docks, and beaches is popular in Scituate as well. Scituate also has shellfishing in many of its beaches and estuaries. Recreational shellfishing in the North and South Rivers has been limited due to non-point specific pollution problems, especially after rain events.<sup>19</sup>

## Subsistence

Information on subsistence fishing in Scituate is either unavailable through secondary data collection or the practice does not exist.

## FUTURE

The town is working on plans to improve Scituate Harbor village; design improvements were conceived with the goal of increasing the town's physical connection to its maritime heritage by making the waterfront more attractive and accessible. This plan is, however, focused on improving the village's commercial district, and makes little mention of the commercial fishing fleet or existing infrastructure (Cecil Group, Inc. 2002).

[T.K.O. Malley's](#), a harborfront restaurant, has requested permission to add dock slips to its facility, including two that will be designated for use by commercial vessels. The Scituate town marina also has plans to expand their facilities; this will allow for more recreational vessels in Scituate Harbor, where recreational boating is constantly expanding, but represents a further transition from a commercial harbor to one catering to recreational vessels.<sup>20</sup>

The town pier in Scituate reports a steady demand for dockage among commercial fishing boats, indicating that the industry here is also relatively steady.

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<sup>19</sup> Profile review comment, Joseph Strazdes, Scituate Shellfish Warden, Town of Scituate, 600 Chief Justice Cushing Way, Scituate, MA 02066, September 20, 2007

<sup>20</sup> Personal Communication, Laura Harbottle, Scituate Town Planner, Town Hall, 600 Chief Justice Cushing Way, Scituate, MA 02066, 8/9/05

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